

AGNELLO AL MACELLO
(LAMB TO SLAUGHTER)

A play in 2 acts

ACT I

SCENE I

All dialogue in *italics* is spoken in Italian.

Curtain opens to a dimly-lit small cottage house in northern Italy during the early Renaissance. AURELIA is sitting down cleaning a bloody dagger with a handkerchief. Her clothes are stained with blood. A body of a woman is seen next to her with blood coming out of the body.

AURELIA: [slowly stands up and looks at the body] *If I knew what to say, I'd say it. If I knew what to do, I'd do it. I'm stuck. I'm stuck here, alone, talking to a dead body that I need to dispose of.*

AURELIA: [pauses and tilts her head] *You could've done a lot in your lifetime, but I had to come and screw things up. It's what I do best, unfortunately.*

AURELIA: [sighs] *What can I say...doing the Devil's work is not easy. *Mie scuse*.*

AURELIA goes to the sink and washes the dagger. She dries it with the handkerchief and then tosses the handkerchief into the fire. She watches the fire ignite before it settles down again. She places the dagger into a sheath and sets the knife down on the countertop. She walks over to the dead woman and grabs the body's arms. AURELIA exits stage left while dragging the body. Lights dim. Curtains close. End of Scene I.

SCENE II

Curtain opens to a sunny bright landscape with a winding road. AURELIA enters stage left and has on new, clean clothes and is carrying a bag. She spots four women slighter older than Aurelia talking at stage right and she walks over.

AURELIA: *Mi scusi*, what town are we in?

ELISABETTA: Oh, we are at the entrance of Constalluccio.

LISABETTA: Are you lost?

AURELIA: No, just trying to find a new home.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, ISABETTA: [In sync sympathetically] Aww, sweetie what's wrong?

AURELIA: [shyly] My family kicked me out and I have nowhere else to go. I don't mean to burden you, but could you help me? *Per favore?*

NICCOLETTA: Of course! Where are you from?

AURELIA: I'm from the outskirts of Florence.

ISABETTA: You poor thing! You must have been walking for days!

AURELIA: It's alright really, I am just glad that I found people that are willing to help me.

ELISABETTA: We are always happy to help. My name is Elisabetta and these are my sisters Lisabetta, Niccoletta, and Isabetta. [gestures towards the three other girls]

AURELIA: [pauses in confusion and then says gratefully] I cannot put into words how grateful I am for your help. *Grazie*. My name is Aurelia.

NICCOLETTA: Such a pretty name for such a pretty girl.

ELISABETTA: [takes AURELIA'S arm in hers] Come on Aurelia, follow us.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, ISABETTA, and AURELIA exit stage right arm in arm. Curtain closes. End of Scene II.

SCENE III

Curtain opens to a busy Renaissance town with many marketplaces, townspeople, and artists selling their works of art. ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, ISABETTA, and AURELIA enter stage left.

AURELIA: [looks around astonished]

LISABETTA: [notices AURELIA] It's amazing isn't it? Welcome to our humble little town.

AURELIA: [amazed] For such a small town, there's so much liveliness in it. I've never seen a town like this before.

ELISABETTA: [chuckles] There isn't.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, ISABETTA, and AURELIA start slowly walking towards stage right passing townspeople, marketplaces, and buildings.

AURELIA: [chuckles] Where are you taking me?

NICCOLETTA: [sarcastically] Out to the woods to kill you.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and AURELIA stop walking and look at NICCOLETTA in surprise and shock.

NICCOLETTA: [playfully] I'm just joking.

LISABETTA: [looks at NICCOLETTA] Be quiet Niccoletta.

LISABETTA: [turns to AURELIA] Don't listen to her Aurelia, she's a little crazy.

NICCOLETTA: [offended] Hey!

LISABETTA: [sassy] You heard me! I said what I said!

NICCOLETTA: [scoffs] Well at least my name isn't a shortened version of Elisabetta's name.

ISABETTA: [giggles]

NICCOLETTA: [turns to ISABETTA] What are you laughing at Isabetta? Your name is an even more shortened version of Elisa's name than Lisa's.

ISABETTA: [offended] Niccoletta, you're just mad that you're the youngest and got an ugly name. Mamma just gave up on your name.

NICCOLETTA: No, Mamma gave up on you and Lisa's name. Mamma went through a thought process to come up with my name. That just proves that I'm Mamma's favorite.

LISABETTA: Please, you think you're Mamma's favorite?

NICCOLETTA: Yes I do.

LISABETTA: I beg to differ. If anything, Elisa is Mamma's favorite.

ELISABETTA: [irritated] Enough! You are not little girls anymore, you are women. You cannot keep bickering like squirrels fighting over an acorn. It's not ladylike.

ELISABETTA: [turns to AURELIA] Aurelia, please excuse my sisters. We're taking you to the church to meet the preacher. Any new people that come into town have to meet the preacher.

AURELIA: Oh, okay. Is there anything I should be prepared for?

ELISABETTA: [kindly] No silly girl, the preacher loves all of God's children. You seem like a kind and charming girl. He'll love you. You have nothing to worry about.

AURELIA: [sighs] Okay. *Grazie* Elisabetta.

ELISABETTA: Of course Aurelia, anything for you, and please, call me Elisa.

NICCOLETTA: [mocking ELISABETTA] Of course Aurelia, anything for you.

NICCOLETTA: Elisa, why don't you talk to us the way you take to Aurelia.

ELISABETTA: Because you foolish girls need to be put in your place.

ELISABETTA takes AURELIA'S arm in hers and begins walking towards stage right. LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA follow behind looking annoyed. Lights dim as they get closer to stage right. Curtain closes. End of Scene III.

SCENE IV

Curtain opens to a white church with many stained glass windows. It is a very bright open space with many plants decorating the church walls. At stage right, FATHER NICCOLO is at the podium talking with LEONARDO, MARCO, and CRISTOFANO. ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, ISABETTA, and AURELIA enter stage left where they are behind the benches.

ELISABETTA: Aurelia, welcome to Constalluccio's only church. The big guy up there at the podium is the preacher.

AURELIA: [looks around] It's beautiful.

ELISABETTA: It sure is, and I should know, I decorated it myself.

AURELIA: [looks at ELISABETTA with a confused look]

ELISABETTA: [chuckles]

LISABETTA: The preacher is our father.

AURELIA: [looks at LISABETTA still confused] Isn't he everyone's father?

LISABETTA: [giggles] Yes, but he's our actual blood father.

AURELIA: Wow. Is he strict?

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, ISABETTA: [In sync] Oh yeah.

NICCOLETTA: You don't understand how hard it was to sneak out.

ELISABETTA: [looks at NICCOLETTA shocked] You snuck out?!

NICCOLETTA: [pauses] Yeah?

ELISABETTA: [looks at LISABETTA and ISABETTA shocked] Did you two know about this?!

LISABETTA: [giggles] Know about? Elise we participated. You were too busy being Miss. Perfect to notice.

ELISABETTA: [turns to ISABETTA shocked] Isa, is this true?

ISABETTA nods her head

ELISABETTA: [soft] Wow.

AURELIA: [chuckles]

ISABETTA: Anyways...shall we introduce Aurelia to papà?

ELISABETTA: Of course.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, and AURELIA walk up the aisle between the benches towards FATHER NICCOLO at stage right. CRISTOFANO, MARCO, and LEONARDO turn around and walk down the aisle of benches towards stage left. Both groups

pass each other. LEONARDO and AURELIA notice each other and when they go past each other, they turn their heads and look back, but keep walking in their respective directions.

FATHER NICCOLO: Ahh my beautiful daughters, *come stai?*

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA: [in sync] Sto bene, papà.

FATHER NICCOLO: [Turns attention to AURELIA] And who might this be?

ELISABETTA: [Takes AURELIA'S arm in hers] Papà, this is Aurelia. She's new in town.

FATHER NICCOLO: [Takes AURELIA'S hand and kisses it] It is a pleasure to meet you, Aurelia. My name is Niccolo de' Rossi but people call me Father or Father Niccolo.

AURELIA: The pleasure is all mine, Father Niccolo.

FATHER NICCOLO: What brings you to our little town?

AURELIA: My family disowned me and kicked me out of my home. I've been on foot for days.

FATHER NICCOLO: How cruel. I'm so sorry you had to endure that Aurelia. You must be so tired.

AURELIA: It's not your fault Father. I'm just grateful I've found a town of people and not just fields of empty land.

FATHER NICCOLO: Still, you shouldn't have had to endure that pain. Say, are you connected with God?

AURELIA: *Si*, Father.

FATHER NICCOLO: Well, I'm sure that God will make everything better for you and set you on your path to righteousness. Oh! You poor thing, you must be so tired from your traveling. Do you have a place to stay?

AURELIA: *No signore.*

FATHER NICCOLO: We have a little cottage in town that is not being used. Would you like to use it?

AURELIA: [pauses] I don't want to burden you, Father.

FATHER NICCOLO: Nonsense, you could never be a burden. All I'm doing is helping a friend in need.

AURELIA: [pauses then sighs in acceptance] *Grazie*, Father. I am in your debt.

FATHER NICCOLO: [Turns his attention to ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA] Girls, can you take our guest to the spare cottage.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA: [in sync] *Si papà*.

FATHER NICCOLO: I will see you, girls, at dinner. *Addio amori miei*.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA: [in sync] *Arrivederci papà*.

AURELIA: [waves at FATHER NICCOLO] *Arrivederci* Father Niccolo.

FATHER NICCOLO: *Arrivederci* Aurelia.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, and AURELIA turn around and walk down the aisle.

LISABETTA: Well, that went well.

AURELIA: [sighs a relieved sigh] Yes, very well.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, and AURELIA start to reach the end of the aisle at left stage. Lights dim and curtain closes. End of Scene IV.

SCENE V

Curtain opens to ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, and AURELIA dimly-lit small cottage. ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, and AURELIA are all in the living room that has an open kitchen. NICCOLETTA and ISABETTA are sitting on the couch while ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, and AURELIA are in the kitchen looking around.

AURELIA: What was this house used for?

ELISABETTA: This was *papà's* house before he became a preacher. *Papà* was going to sell the house after his parents died, but he decided that there was too much sentiment in this house to just throw it away. Also, he thought it would be a good idea to give it to one of us.

AURELIA: So how come none of you are living here?

LISABETTA: We couldn't decide who was going to get the house, and the house isn't big enough for the four of us, so we decided to just leave it here. The house is mainly for emergency purposes.

AURELIA: And this is an emergency?

NICCOLETTA: [sarcastically] Would you rather sleep outside on the ground because that can be arranged?

AURELIA: [chuckles] No I think I'm good, thanks.

ISABETTA: What was going on between you and Leo?

AURELIA: [confused] What?

ISABETTA: Back at the church, I saw the way you and Leo were looking at each other. [looks at AURELIA with a knowing look]

AURELIA: Isa, I have no idea what you are talking about.

ISABETTA: Yes you do. Stop lying.

AURELIA: [flabbergasted] I don't, truthfully.

NICCOLETTA: Oh come on Aurelia! We all saw you!

AURELIA: [pauses then sighs] Okay fine, but I just thought he was... fairly attractive- nothing else.

LISABETTA: Fairly attractive? I think you mean fully attractive. That boy is something else.

ELISABETTA: Lisa!

LISABETTA: WHAT?! Am I wrong?!

ELISABETTA: [shakes head in disappointment]

AURELIA: So... who is he?

LISABETTA: [squeals in excitement] Not even two hours into a new town and she's already found herself a man.

NICCOLETTA, ISABETTA: [giggle]

LISABETTA: Leonardo or Leo was in the military, but came back home when his parents died. He is something like a protector of this town.

NICCOLETTA: [mocking LISABETTA] And he's so handsome!

LISABETTA: Hush your mouth Nicco!

NICCOLETTA: [mocking LISABETTA] But am I wrong?!

LISABETTA: Nicco, if you won't be quiet I'll shut you up myself!

NICCOLETTA: Go ahead, I dare you!

LISABETTA and NICCOLETTA glare at each other.

ELISABETTA: [irritated] Girls that is enough!

ELISABETTA: [sighs] Sometimes, I think you girls are purposefully trying to annoy me.

Ou drrLISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA: [in sync] Ya think?

ELISABETTA: Wait, so you guys are-

LISABETTA: [interrupts ELISABETTA] Anyways, back to Leo.

ELISABETTA: [sighs a defeated sigh]

LISABETTA: I don't remember Leo being interested in many girls during our youth. He was always training, but then again, his childhood dream was to fight for his country. And he did for a little bit, so now that his dream is complete, maybe he's interested in finding a wife. [looks at AURELIA and gives a knowing look]

AURELIA: [scoffs] Yeah, I doubt that's going to happen.

LISABETTA: What do you mean?

AURELIA: I'm not interested in a husband, or even a relationship as a whole.

ELISABETTA: [looks at LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA] I mean...am I wrong?

LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA: [scattered giggles] No.

AURELIA: [annoyed] That should be this family's motto, "am I wrong"?

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, ISABETTA: [scattered chuckles]

ELISABETTA: [playfully and sarcastically] Alright girls, we should probably leave before Aurelia chops our heads off.

LISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, ISABETTA get up off the couch and ELISABETTA heads to the door. LISABETTA, NICCOLETTA, ISABETTA exit the house and ELISABETTA stays behind.

ELISABETTA: Let us know if you need anything, Aurelia.

AURELIA: Of course, thank you.

ELISABETTA exits out of the cottage house. AURELIA is wandering around the living room when someone knocks on the door. AURELIA opens the door and sees LEONARDO.

LEONARDO: *Buonasera* miss.

AURELIA: *Buonasera*. What can I do for you?

LEONARDO: Well first, you can start by telling me your name.

AURELIA: [scoffs, smiles, looks at the ground then looks back up at LEONARDO] My name is Aurelia.

LEONARDO: [whispers] *Bellissima*.

LEONARDO: [clears throat] I don't know if you remember, but we saw each other at the church.

AURELIA: [pauses] We did?

LEONARDO: [puzzled] Yes, we looked at each other as we were walking in opposite directions.

AURELIA: Hmm...nope that's not ringing any bells.

LEONARDO: [pauses while looking at AURELIA] You're joking right?

AURELIA: [pauses]

AURELIA: [playfully] Maybe I am, maybe I'm not. I guess we will never know.

AURELIA: [pauses] Is there a reason for your visit... sir?

LEONARDO: [smiles] Yes, there is. I've heard that you're new in town and I thought that I could show you around.

AURELIA: [dramatically] Well, right now I'm awfully tired as I have been on foot for days, so today my answer is no. But, come back tomorrow and maybe my answer will change. Good day to you sir. [smiles and closes door]

AURELIA turns her back to the door and leans on it. LEONARDO stays in his place then turns around slowly and leaves. AURELIA and LEONARDO are both smiling. Lights dim and curtain closes. End of Scene V.

SCENE VI

Curtain opens to the dimly-lit cottage. AURELIA walks into the living room and goes into the kitchen. She starts making breakfast right before she hears a knock on the door. AURELIA opens the door and LEONARDO is standing at the doorstep.

LEONARDO: I'm back.

AURELIA: You're back.

LEONARDO: [sighs and runs a hand through his hair] Aurelia?

AURELIA: Yes?

LEONARDO: Will you do me the honor of letting me take you around town?

AURELIA: [pauses] Formal aren't we?

AURELIA: [chuckles] Calm down *Tesoro*. I'd love to go with you just let me get presentable.

AURELIA: [opens the door all the way and gestures inside] Come in.

LEONARDO: [steps inside] You have a lovely home.

AURELIA: [closes the door] Why thank you.

AURELIA: [turns and faces LEONARDO] You stay right here and make yourself at home. I'll be back.

LEONARDO: [chuckles] Yes ma'am.

AURELIA leaves the living room and is out of sight. LEONARDO looks around the living room. Soon after, AURELIA returns with proper clothes and shoes.

LEONARDO: [looks up at AURELIA and raises his arm] Shall we?

AURELIA: [takes LEONARDO'S arm in hers and giggles] We shall.

LEONARDO and AURELIA exit out the cottage door and continue walking arm in arm. Lights dim and curtain closes. End of Scene VI.

SCENE VII

Curtain opens to a busy Renaissance town with many townspeople at different marketplaces and buildings. Artists are seen selling their work on the street for any passing patrons. LEONARDO and AURELIA enter stage right.

LEONARDO: [gesturing] And lastly, this is downtown Constalluccio, the busiest part of the whole town.

AURELIA: I bet it is. What all is here?

LEONARDO and AURELIA begin walking toward stage left.

LEONARDO: Well, you have your markets to get food and vegetables. You've seen the church. [pauses then chuckles] You won't make it out of this town without having an artist try and sell you their work. Some of it is pretty good...some of it not so much.

AURELIA: [giggles]

A group of men passes by AURELIA and LEONARDO with supplies and decorations. The group exits stage right.

AURELIA: [notices the group of men] What's that for?

LEONARDO: Oh, tomorrow the town is hosting its annual festival.

AURELIA: [looks at LEONARDO playfully angry] And you didn't think to tell me?

LEONARDO: [facepalms his face] How could I forget the festival, I'm so sorry.

AURELIA: [laughs] Leonardo, it's okay. I was just joking.

AURELIA: [giggles] What is the festival for?

LEONARDO: There isn't necessarily a particular reason, but the main reason why the festival started was to just raise morales. You know, keep everyone in the town happy.

AURELIA: Yeah I understand. That's interesting. What's the festival called?

LEONARDO: *La Festa della Felicità.*

AURELIA: Who all can join the festival?

LEONARDO: Anyone and everyone that can get there on time.

AURELIA: [giggles]

LEONARDO: And you know some people even bring dates. [looks at AURELIA and smiles]

AURELIA: [looks at LEONARDO and pauses] Is there something you want to tell me?

LEONARDO: You're not going to make this easy for me are you.

AURELIA: [playfully pouts] Where's the fun in that?

LEONARDO turns and faces AURELIA holding her hands.

LEONARDO: [sighs then smiles] Aurelia, would you like to go to *La Festa della Felicità* with me?

AURELIA: [playfully] Hmm, let me think about it...

LEONARDO: [scoffs]

AURELIA: [giggles] Yes, Leonardo I would love to go to the festival with you. [smiles]

LEONARDO: [smiles and kisses AURELIA'S hand] *Grazie* miss. Oh, and *per favore*, call me Leo. That's what everyone calls me.

AURELIA: [frowns] Well, I like Leonardo better, it's more... charming.

LEONARDO: [smiles] You think so?

AURELIA: [smiles] I know so.

AURELIA and LEONARDO continue walking towards stage left. As they get closer, the lights gradually dim and curtain closes. End of Scene VI.

SCENE VII

Curtain opens to AURELIA'S cottage. AURELIA walks in with her festival clothes on. She goes to the kitchen to start making breakfast, then hears a knock on the door.

AURELIA: [mutters] Why do these people always have to interrupt my breakfast?

AURELIA opens the door to see ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA at her doorstep.

ELISABETTA: Well don't you look fancy.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA let themselves in.

ELISABETTA: [sarcastically] You know, you would think that the girl you helped save off the streets would try and contact you the next day...but no.

AURELIA: I'm sorry, I was busy.

NICCOLETTA: With Leo?

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and AURELIA turn and look at NICCOLETTA in shock.

NICCOLETTA: What? It's a small town, word travels fast.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA turn and look at AURELIA.

LISABETTA: [cautiously] Is this true?

AURELIA: [pauses] Yes.

LISABETTA: [squeals with excitement]

AURELIA: Yesterday, Leonardo led me on a tour across town.

LISABETTA: [squeals even higher with excitement] What happened? Tell us everything.

AURELIA: There's not much to tell. He just took me around town and showed me what places to go to and what people to avoid.

LISABETTA: [frowns]

AURELIA: [pauses] And he may or may not have asked me to the festival.

ELISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA have a look of shock and excitement on their face.

LISABETTA: [squeals] YOU'RE KIDDING!

AURELIA: [smiles] Nope.

LISABETTA: I can't believe this! I mean, you've only been in Constulliccio for barely three days and you've already found yourself someone!

AURELIA: [shyly giggles]

ELISABETTA: [walks over to AURELIA and starts fixing AURELIA's hair and dress] You look very beautiful Aurelia. Leo won't know what hit him.

AURELIA: [giggles]

LISABETTA: [mocking AURELIA] I'm not interested in a husband, or even a relationship as a whole.

AURELIA: [throws a pillow at LISABETTA]

LISABETTA: [laughs] Hey, your words not mine!

AURELIA: [chuckles] When is the festival?

LISABETTA: Eager to get your man I see.

AURELIA: Lisa, don't make me throw this pillow again.

LISABETTA: [giggles] Okay okay. The festival begins at noon.

AURELIA: Ok, so we have about half an hour to an hour. Are you girls ready?

ELISABETTA: Yes, we came to see if you wanted to go to the festival with us or had even been informed about it, but clearly someone beat us to it.

ISABETTA: Do you know when he is coming over?

AURELIA: Unfortunately, no. That's why I got ready so early.

There is a knock at the door. AURELIA goes to answer it, but ELISABETTA opens the door first.

ELISABETTA: Leo! Good to see you.

LEONARDO: You too, Elisa. [takes her hand and kisses it]

ELISABETTA: [turns around and looks at AURELIA] It's for you.

AURELIA walks over to the door and smiles at LEONARDO.

LEONARDO: [pauses looking amazed] *Bellissima.*

AURELIA: [playfully] And you don't look too bad yourself.

LEONARDO: [chuckles and raises his arm] Shall we?

AURELIA: [looks back at ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA]

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA: [gestures to go] [whispers] Go, go!

AURELIA: [takes LEONARDO'S arm in hers and giggles] We shall.

AURELIA closes the door and she and LEONARDO walk towards stage right. Lights dim and curtain closes. End of Scene VII

SCENE VIII

Curtain opens to downtown Constalluccio decorated for *La Festa della Felicità*. Many townspeople are there mingling. LEONARDO and AURELIA enter stage right arm in arm.

AURELIA: [amazed expression]

LEONARDO: [looks at AURELIA and chuckles] It's beautiful isn't it?

AURELIA: I understand why they call it the Festival of Happiness.

LEONARDO: Have you had something to eat?

AURELIA: [slightly irritated] No, people keep interrupting me when I'm trying to make breakfast.

LEONARDO: [chuckles and kisses the side of AURELIA'S head] How dare they! Let's get you something to eat.

LEONARDO leads AURELIA to a table of food at stage right-center and they start fixing a plate. ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA approach.

LISABETTA: How are you two lovebirds doing?

ELISABETTA: [hits LISABETTA on the arm]

LISABETTA: What?!

LEONARDO, AURELIA: [laugh]

ELISABETTA: How do you like the festival, Aurelia?

AURELIA: I've never seen anything like this before. I love the liveliness of it.

ELISABETTA: That's what makes it amazing.

NICCOLETTA: Ugh, there's papà- I mean look there's papà!

ISABETTA: [groans]

ELISABETTA: [hits NICCOLETTA and ISABETTA] Girls that is your father! Show some respect.

ISABETTA: We'll show some respect when he gets off our backs.

NICCOLETTA: What she said.

ELISABETTA: [irritated] Girls, let's go, papà is over there.

ELISABETTA: [turns to AURELIA] See you later Aurelia. Have fun!

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA leave AURELIA and LEONARDO and go towards FATHER NICCOLO at stage left.

AURELIA: [chuckles] One day, Elisa is going to go insane.

LEONARDO: [chuckles] Who says she hasn't?

AURELIA: [laughs]

Music starts

LEONARDO: [holds his hand out] May I have this dance?

AURELIA: [pauses and looks up at LEONARDO] I'd love to. [places her hand in his]

LEONARDO leads AURELIA out to center stage. LEONARDO puts his right hand on AURELIA'S waist and the left hand in her right. AURELIA puts her left hand on his shoulder and her right hand in LEONARDO'S left hand. They start slowly swaying to the music.

AURELIA: Leonardo, can I ask you something?

LEONARDO: Of course, ask me anything?

AURELIA: What do you see in me?

LEONARDO: [stops dancing then starts again] W-what do you mean by that?

AURELIA: I just don't know what you see in me. You barely know me but I can tell just by the way you're looking at me that this isn't a little crush.

LEONARDO: I'll be completely honest with you, I don't know. I just know that when I saw you at the church, I had to get to know you. I had to know who you were.

AURELIA: [nods her head] What do you want to know?

LEONARDO: Everything.

AURELIA: [chuckles softly] Well, my name is Aurelia. I am nineteen years old. I am originally from the outskirts of Florence, but my family kicked me out of the house.

LEONARDO: Why?

AURELIA: I wish I knew. Maybe because no one wanted to marry me in my town.

LEONARDO: [pauses] I am so sorry, Aurelia.

AURELIA: Thank you, Leonardo, but I'm alright. I know I may have only been here for barely three days, but this town has made me feel more like family than my actual blood ever did.

LEONARDO: That's the great thing about this town. That's why I wanted to stay here instead of leave for the military after my parents died.

AURELIA: I am so sorry for your loss, Leonardo.

LEONARDO: Thank you, Aurelia.

AURELIA and LEONARDO keep swaying to the music and their bodies get closer and closer. LEONARDO puts his forehead on AURELIA'S forehead. LEONARDO leans in for a kiss and AURELIA mirrors. LEONARDO kisses AURELIA and she kisses back. LISABETTA throws a bowl of uncooked rice on them. AURELIA and LEONARDO stop kissing and look at LISABETTA. Everyone is looking at LISABETTA.

LISABETTA: Too early?

AURELIA and LEONARDO laugh and go back to kissing. Lights dim and curtain closes. End of Scene VIII.

SCENE IX

Curtain opens to AURELIA'S cottage. AURELIA is in the living room smiling and plops down on the couch. She has a goofy and happy look on her face. She gets comfortable on the couch and then the candles in the house go out. She sits up.

AURELIA: [confused] What the-

A sound comes from the door. AURELIA slowly gets up, grabs a candle, and lights it. She slowly walks to the door and sees a white letter on the ground. She picks the letter up and sets the candle down. AURELIA opens the letter.

AURELIA: [blood-curdling scream]

She pauses and reads the letter again. And lets out a cry. Tears run down her face.

AURELIA: NO! I AM NOT KILLING HIM! NOT HIM. *PER FAVORE* NOT HIM!

The cottage starts shaking and AURELIA starts choking.

AURELIA: [coughing] O-ok fine. I'll do it.

AURELIA stops choking and the cottage stops shaking. She starts crying.

AURELIA: [sobbing] Perché io? Why me?

AURELIA slowly starts to fall to the ground and continues sobbing. Lights fade out and curtain closes. End of Scene IX. End of Act I.

ACT II

SCENE I

Curtain opens to AURELIA'S cottage. She takes her dagger out of her bag and pulls it out of its sheath. AURELIA examines the dagger, flashing it to the audience. She puts it back in its sheath and puts the knife in the pocket of her dress. She is startled by a knock on the door. AURELIA goes and opens the door. ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA are at her doorstep. AURELIA tried her best to look and sound happy.

AURELIA: [fake smiles] Ciao!

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, NICCOLETTA: Ciao!

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA let themselves into the cottage.

ELISABETTA: [giggles] You've had yourself a fun day.

AURELIA: [softly chuckles] Yeah. I'll never forget it.

LISABETTA: I cannot believe you and Leo kissed!

AURELIA: [raises an eyebrow] Is it that unbelievable?

LISABETTA: No, it was just so sudden. You've only known this boy for three days.

AURELIA: [softly chuckles] Yeah. I guess you could say that I work fast.

LISABETTA: [giggles] You go, girl!

ISABETTA: Is something the matter Aurelia?

AURELIA: [pauses then softly grunts] Nothing really, I'm just not feeling too well.

ELISABETTA: Come on girls, let's let Aurelia rest.

ELISABETTA, LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA get up and head for the door.

AURELIA: Wait! Before you go, could you let Leonardo know to meet me at the bridge at 5:00?

NICCOLETTA: [gasps then winks] Sure, we'll let him know.

AURELIA: [scoffs] It's not like that.

ISABETTA: Sure it isn't.

LISABETTA, ISABETTA, and NICCOLETTA exit the cottage. ELISABETTA stays behind.

ELISABETTA: I believe that it's not like that, however, I'm just going to tell you to not do anything I wouldn't do.

AURELIA: Yes ma'am.

ELISABETTA: [softly laughs then turns and leaves, closing the door behind her]

AURELIA: [sighs a defeated sigh and starts softly sobbing]

Lights dim and curtain closes. End of Scene I.

SCENE II

Curtain opens to a setting in the woods with a bridge over a river of water. AURELIA is upstage left. She looks defeated. LEONARDO enters stage right and sees AURELIA. He walks over to her.

LEONARDO: [kisses the side of AURELIA's head] You wanted to see me?

AURELIA: [looks straight ahead] I do.

LEONARDO: [notices AURELIA's gloomy expression] What's wrong?

AURELIA: [turns her head and looks at LEONARDO] Leonardo, I haven't been truthful with you. I think now is the time to tell you who I truly am.

LEONARDO: [confused] What do you mean?

AURELIA: [looks straight ahead] My family didn't kick me out. They're supposed to be dead.

LEONARDO: W-what?

AURELIA: My family died because of the Black Death. I don't know how I didn't die. I was broken, I had no one. Then this... force... came and made a deal with me. They promised me that I would get my family back if I would work for them. I didn't know what that meant, so with me being a naive 16-year-old, I agreed. I should've known to never make deals with the Devil. They tricked me. I thought I would get my family back- and I did, but they don't remember or notice me. Now, I'm stuck here doing the Devil's bidding, and there's nothing I can do about it. If I disobey, more people die. I can't stay in one place for too long or else people get suspicious, so I make up the lie of my family kicking me out. But, no one questions it. I mean... why wouldn't you want to trust an innocent little girl?

AURELIA: [pauses then sighs] I-I'm stuck.

LEONARDO: [pauses and looks at AURELIA like she is crazy] What do they have you do?

AURELIA: Steal, trick, torture people. But, worst of all... they make me kill.

LEONARDO: [pauses] How many?

AURELIA: W-what?

LEONARDO: How many people have you killed?

AURELIA: [sighs] I lost count when I turned 17. I regret everything, but it doesn't even matter anymore, they're dead.

LEONARDO: [pauses]

LEONARDO: [assertively] I can help you.

AURELIA: [scoffs and turns to LEONARDO] How? Don't you think I tried everything?

LEONARDO: No. No, we will find a way. I'm not going to lose you! Not this soon.

AURELIA: [pauses and tears well up in her eyes] And I don't want to lose you either.

AURELIA kisses LEONARDO.

LEONARDO: [breaks away from the kiss and looks at AURELIA] Why are you telling me this?

AURELIA pauses and discreetly reaches for the knife in her pocket.

AURELIA: Because... I thought it would be fair to tell you why you have to die.

AURELIA suddenly stabs LEONARDO and pulls the knife out of his body. LEONARDO looks back at AURELIA confused and terrified. LEONARDO starts spewing blood out of his mouth and slowly falls to the floor. AURELIA stands over LEONARDO.

AURELIA: [sniffles] I'm sorry Leonardo.

AURELIA takes the knife and stabs him in the heart. LEONARDO twitches but then stops moving. AURELIA slowly takes the knife out of LEONARDO'S body. She goes to the river and washes the blood off of the knife and slips the dagger back into its sheath. She places the dagger into the pocket of her dress and then washes her hands in the river's water. When she finishes, she slowly walks back towards LEONARDO's body. AURELIA bends down and gently closes his eyes.

AURELIA: [holds back tears] I'm sorry so Leonardo. You didn't deserve this. I didn't deserve you.

AURELIA walks to center-left stage and grabs her bag hidden in a bush. She goes behind a group of trees at upstage right and changes into new clothes. She emerges from the trees and exits stage right. Lights dim and curtain closes. End of Scene II.

SCENE III

Curtain opens to the entrance of Constalluccio. AURELIA walks out of the entrance towards stage left. When she gets to center stage she stops and looks back at the town. Tears are in her eyes. She looks down in despair, sighs, and then continues walking. Lights dim and curtain closes. End of Scene III.

SCENE IV

Curtain opens to a winding road entering a new town. A woman is standing at the entrance planting flowers. AURELIA enters stage right, walks down the winding road, and stops at the woman.

AURELIA: *Mi scusi*, what town are we in?

WOMAN: We are just entering the town of Luccia.

WOMAN stops planting the flower and looks at AURELIA.

WOMAN: Are you lost, *cara*?

AURELIA: [shyly] No, just trying to find a new home. My family kicked me out and I have nowhere else to go. I don't mean to burden you, but could you help me? *Per favore?*

Lights dim and curtain closes. End of Scene IV.

THE END

